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1. Education & Skills

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Correspondence

# ESFA Update further education: 6 May 2020

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## **1. Latest information on coronavirus (COVID-19)**

The Department for Education (DfE) has published guidance about COVID-19 in educational settings for staff, parents and carers, pupils and students

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings>) on GOV.UK.

Please check GOV.UK (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings>) regularly for updates.

There is also guidance on the apprenticeship service about COVID-19

(<https://help.apprenticeships.education.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/sections/360003793119-Coronavirus>).

## **2. Information: provider relief scheme**

ESFA have begun to assess applications to the provider relief scheme and will begin to notify applicants of the outcomes from today. We expect to notify all applicants by 12 May, as promised, and we would ask for your patience in the meantime.

## **3. Information: paying apprentices that are furloughed**

We have published information on paying apprentices that are furloughed

(<https://help.apprenticeships.education.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/articles/360013647099-Paying-your-apprentices-that-are-furloughed>), along with a worked example, on the apprenticeship service.

## **4. Information: Secretary of State approved list of independent special schools in England and Wales and special post-16 institutions**

We have published the latest Secretary of State approved list of independent special schools in England and Wales and special post-16 Institutions that parents and young people can express as a preference for when their education health and care (EHC) plan is being agreed.

The annual application process opened on 1 May 2020. The guidance and supporting information (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/applying-to-be-on-the-approved-list-of-independent-special-institutions>) is available on GOV.UK.

Enquiries about this should be made to [HNSSoS.EFA@education.gov.uk](mailto:HNSSoS.EFA@education.gov.uk).

## **5. Information: 2019 to 2020 year-end forecast funding claim cancelled**

The 2019 to -2020 funding claims guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sfa-funding-claims/how-to-submit-a-funding-claim-for-2019-to-2020>) requires providers with the allocations listed below to complete a year-end forecast funding claim:

- ESFA AEB – Adult Skills and Community Learning – grant-funded
- ESFA AEB – 19 to -24 traineeships (procured)
- Advanced Learner Loans Bursary (ALLB) – grant-funded
- ESFA AEB – Adult Skills Learner Support – paid-on-profile (AEB procured)
- 16 to 19 education

**As part of the ESFA’s COVID-19 response, ESFA will now not require your organisation to complete a year-end claims forecast due in June 2020.**

We will provide a separate update on the final claim later in May.

If you have any questions, please contact the Service Desk (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/esfa-business-operations-help-and-support>).

## **6. Information: non levy procured apprenticeships contracts**

Contract extensions were issued to training providers at the beginning of March via the Manage your education and skills funding service (<https://skillsfunding.service.gov.uk/>), with a start date of 1 April 2020.

Training providers with existing procured contracts received extensions to these same contracts, which cover the new financial year (2020-21) in full. These extensions were to fund carry over costs for existing apprentices as well as new apprenticeship starts, with start dates up to and including 31 October 2020 – this aligned with our intention for all starts to be through the apprenticeship service from 1 November 2020.

In light of the challenges being faced by providers and employers as a result of the current coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, we are extending the transition period onto the service – funds available for new starts on non-levy procured contracts can now be used until 31 March 2021.

We remain committed to giving smaller employers greater control over their apprenticeship choices by moving towards a system in which employers select an apprenticeship standard, choose their training provider and secure access to funding for all new apprenticeships through the apprenticeship service. As originally planned, this means, over time, more employers who do not pay the apprenticeship levy will begin to access apprenticeship training via the apprenticeship service, as well as through a provider with an existing government contract (now extended until 31 March 2021).

Following this extended transition all starts will be through the apprenticeship service from 1 April 2021. Contract variations will be issued in the summer to support the changes and performance management rules will be confirmed shortly through the usual routes.

## **7. Information: ESFA funded adult education budget funding rates and formula guide 2020 to 2021**

We have published version 1 of the adult education budget (AEB) funding rates and formula guide (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adult-education-budget-aeb-funding-rates-and-formula-2020-to-2021>) for 2020 to 2021.

This document sets out how we will fund activity for ESFA funded AEB and 16 to 18 traineeships. There are no changes to the funding rates or the funding calculation this year.

This guide covers 2020 to 2021 and is our current advice for the funding year. We know that providers are working through exceptional circumstances due to COVID-19. We may publish further updates about the impact of COVID-19 on our guidance as these become clear. We will tell you about any changes in ESFA Update.

If you have any queries after reading our guidance contact us, marking your query for the attention of the Rates and Learning Aims group.

## **8. Information: publication of ESFA adult education budget funding rules for 2020 to 2021**

We have published the draft ESFA adult education budget (AEB) funding rules 2020 to 2021 (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/adult-education-budget-aeb-funding-rules-2020-to-2021>). The rules apply to all providers of education and training who receive AEB funding from the ESFA.

We have set out any changes since our last update in the summary of changes section. We aim to update the guide in June to include a section on performance management.

These rules cover 2020 to 2021 and are our current advice for the funding year.

We know that providers are working through exceptional circumstances due to COVID-19. We may publish further updates about the impact of COVID-19 on our funding rules as these become clear. We will tell you about any changes in the ESFA Update.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued hard work in these difficult times. For further information, please read this guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-further-education-provision/maintaining-education-and-skills-training-provision-further-education-providers>).

If you have any queries, please contact us using our online enquiry form ([https://form.education.gov.uk/en/AchieveForms/?form\\_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-f9f4f5a1-936f-448b-bbeb-9dcdd595f468/AF-Stage-8aa41278-3cdd-45a3-ad87-80cbffb8b992/definition.json&redirectlink=%2Fen&cancelRedirectLink=%2Fen](https://form.education.gov.uk/en/AchieveForms/?form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-f9f4f5a1-936f-448b-bbeb-9dcdd595f468/AF-Stage-8aa41278-3cdd-45a3-ad87-80cbffb8b992/definition.json&redirectlink=%2Fen&cancelRedirectLink=%2Fen)).

## **9. Information: 16 to 19 funding regulations guidance**

We have published the 16 to 19 funding regulations guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-funding-regulations-for-post-16-provision>) for academic year 2020 to 2021. We have included information on the impacts of coronavirus (COVID-19) and the use of electronic signatures. We have listed the changes at the front of the guide.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued hard work in these difficult times.

## **10. Information: 2020 to 2021 student support scheme guides**

We have published student financial support scheme guides for the 2020 to 2021 academic year for:

- 16 to 19 Bursary Fund (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2020-to-2021-academic-year>)
- Free meals in further education (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/free-meals-in-further-education-funded-institutions-guide-for-the-2020-to-2021-academic-year>)
- Residential Bursary Fund (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/residential-bursary-fund-guide-for-the-2020-to-2021-academic-year>)
- Residential Support Scheme (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/residential-support-scheme-guide-for-academic-year-2020-to-2021>)
- Care to Learn (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/care-to-learn-guide-for-the-2020-to-2021-academic-year>)

You should ensure you review the guides and are clear about the funding rules which apply to each scheme.

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund guide has been updated to re-emphasise that both types of bursary funding are designed to help students overcome the individual financial barriers to participation they face. Institutions must ensure the funds go to those who genuinely need them and should not award any student a set amount of funding without an assessment of the actual needs they have. We have added a checklist (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2020-to-2021-academic-year#checklist>) for assessing bursary applications and a ‘do’s and don’ts’ (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2020-to-2021-academic-year#summary>) summary of key rules which institutions may find helpful.

## **11. Information: off-the-job training and maternity leave**

ESFA has recently reviewed the policy on apprenticeship off-the-job training and considered the position for apprentices on maternity leave.

From 1 April 2020 we will provide funding to a training provider where an apprentice on maternity leave uses any of their 10 designated keeping in touch (KIT days) to undertake apprenticeship off the job training and/or assessment, including end-point assessment. Where KIT days are used for apprenticeship off-the-job training the ESFA will require the apprentice, employer and provider to sign up to an agreement which must be kept in the evidence pack.

Details of what this agreement must contain will be in the next update of the apprenticeship funding rules and is available on request in the interim from the Service Desk (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/esfa-business-operations-help-and-support>).

## **12. Information: apprenticeship service - new apprentice record status**

The apprenticeship service has introduced an additional “Completed” status to support employers and providers manage their apprentice records.

Employers and provider are able to view and filter their apprentice’s by record, status and download the detail of their apprentice records from the ‘Manage your Apprenticeship’ section of the account.

Each apprentice record will have one of the following statuses:

- waiting to start

- live
- paused
- stopped
- completed

An apprentice record shows a “Completed” status when the training provider has updated their ILR return to confirm all training and assessment has taken place.

The Completion Payment Month displayed on the record indicates when the 20% Completion Payment has been processed. This does not necessarily represent the date the apprentice completed the apprenticeship.

If you have any queries, please contact the Apprenticeship Service on 08000 150 600.

### **13. Information: what impact do school closures have on my safeguarding responsibilities under the Prevent Duty?**

Prevent is a vital part of our work to safeguard vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism and it remains in operation in local authorities during this challenging time.

We have published information on Prevent Management during the closure of education settings (<https://educateagainsthate.com/blog/posts/school-closures-ongoing-prevent-management-support/>), which includes guidance for those institutions who have pupils receiving Channel support.